AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and each other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

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AGITATE! EDUCATE! ORGANIZE!

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FINANCIERS URGE SUBSIDY BUT BOYCOTT AMERICAN VESSELS

Publicly, the ship subsidy advocate weeps salty tears for America's merchant marine.

Privately, there is no weeping among these hard-boiled. Their tears are for public notice, to incite emotion and sentiment of the populace, who are expected to cheer every mention of "the Starry Banner on the seven seas."

There is no weeping or sentiment when these ship subsidy advocates figure how to grab government-owned vessels without cost; or when steamship companies figure how the immigration clause of the bill will aid them.

Another brand of these patriots shout for "a merchant marine" while they themselves have agreements with foreign ship companies to carry their export freight.

Thousands of honest-minded citizens have been tricked by the two-faced policy of these ship subsidy advocates.

These citizens are not aware that this country's largest railroad systems have been boycotting American ships and pledging foreign ship companies to aid them in securing cargoes.

These charges, backed by documentary evidence, were made in the United States senate last year, by Senator Ransdell of Louisiana and Senator Jones of Washington.

The agreements link up great American railroad systems and their subsidiaries with foreign ship companies while American vessels rust and rot waiting for cargoes.

Among the railroad systems involved are the Pennsylvania, Great Northern, Boston & Albany (New York Central), Norfolk & Western, Chesapeake & Ohio, Southern, Baltimore & Ohio, Missouri Pacific, Boston & Maine, and Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul. The latter road, together with the Great Northern, had their agreements with Japanese steamship companies.

Features of these agreements include:

Free wharfage and use of warehouses for the foreign ships.

Special piers set aside by railroads for foreign lines.

Exclusive and free use of facilities.

Reduced rates of freight.

Railroads pledge to make every reasonable effort to secure the amount of freight moved by foreign ships.

(This provision means that the railroads will "use their economic and banking influence to divert American freight cargoes for foreign vessels as against vessels of their own country.)

Finally, it is to use their influence to secure lower taxes for foreign ships and to supply them coal below market price.

It should be borne in mind that while these railroads were aiding foreign ship owners to destroy the American merchant marine, the railroads were receiving vast sums from the government because of government operation of the railroads during the war.

During all this time the railroads themselves have stood with hat in hand before congress and pleaded for aid.

How can a subsidy offset such advantages these railroads give foreign ships?

Free dockage, free wharfs, free use of facilities and reduced freight rates?

If railroad financiers of any other nation on earth were caught in such transactions they would be held up to public scorn or banished from their country.

What else can be placed on the word of men who have hushed up this matter while they plead for government aid to a few privileged ship owners?

What can be said of the United States shipping board when it so gingerly handles this ingrown rascality of American's leading financiers?

What can be said of politicians and newspaper editors who make no mention of this situation and whisper their slanders that foreign influences are behind those who oppose looting the treasury?

"CAN'T-STRIKE" LAW FAVORED; CAUTIOUS ARGUMENT IS USED

Washington, Dec. 16.—In urging "can't-strike" legislation in his annual message, the president departs from stereotyped phrases that have so long been used by advocates of handcuff laws.

There is nothing harsh in the president's well-rounded plea "to enforce decisions of the board." There is no mention of "penalties for strikes," or to court rooms, or bolts and bars and steel walls that would arouse the resistance of workers. Instead, the suggestion of chaining men to their jobs is delivered in a gentle, matter-of-fact way. In other portions of his message the president speaks frankly, but in favoring "can't-strike" laws he reveals a finesse worthy of a Near-East diplomat, and serves notice on other Allenites to be more "smooth" and suave in pleading for handcuff laws.

First, the president is emphatic that "the right of strike of railway workers to quit their employment must not be denied. With that thought impressed on his audience, the inevitable BUT appears, as is shown in this criss-cross logic so common with injunction judges:

"Let there be no confusion about the suggested enforcement of power under the decisions effective. There can be no denial of constitutional rights of either railway servants or railway managers. No man can be denied his right to labor when and how he chooses, or ceases to labor when he so elects, BUT, since the government assumes to safeguard his interests while employed in an essential public service, the security of society itself demands his retirement from the service it shall not be so timed and related as to effect the destruction of that service."

This lullaby to labor that the government guards his interests—instead of permitting him to guard them himself—is followed by the claim that the administration of justice in labor cases is an accident and if it is not continued it will reflect on the dignity of government.

The president makes this astonishing statement, which would convey the impression that his policy was blundered into rather than carefully thought out and cautiously developed:

"We have assumed as a responsibility in necessary regulation that we unconsciously have assumed the duty of maintaining and maintained service; therefore the lawful power for the enforcement of decisions is necessary to maintain the majesty of government and to administer to the public welfare."

The president's "can't-strike" recommendation will hardly be considered at this session, as the administration has the fight of its career to jam the subsidy bill through the senate. This means delays in railway legislation, without taking on more. At the next session of congress several handcuff senators will pass from public life.

WAGES-BY-LAW FAILS; REAL PURPOSE SHOWN

Washington, Dec. 16.—Labor papers from New South Wales, Australia, received at A. F. of L. headquarters are filled with accounts of the fight organized labor is making in that far-off country to stop legalized wage reductions.

Under the law an arbitration court sets wages. The government proposes to deprive the employee of the benefits of the law and to debar the court from setting wages of rural workers.

It is further proposed that where employers claim that "serious unemployment" has resulted or will result from the operation of an award wages-by-law will not apply. Neither will wages-by-law apply in the establishment that is operating under a profit-sharing or copartnership scheme.

In other words, the employer has only to plead poverty to the court or throw a few shares of stock to employees, and they immediately are out of the industrial court's jurisdiction and can pay any rate of wages they like.

New South Wales trade unionists declare the bill is a measure to force wages down to the lowest possible figure, and if the financial scheme it will spread to other states in the Australian commonwealth.

It will be remembered that the Australian system of setting wages by law was hailed as the "labor solution" 20 years ago. It is now falling to pieces, and the claims of the American Federation of Labor are again justified.

Despite this experience, President Harding advocated the same system in his annual message. Not just as glowing as was used in Australia when the system was established there.

NO SHORTAGE OF TAILORS.

Chicago, Dec. 16.—Custom tailor employers have joined the cry of "labor shortage," which is a favorite method of the tailor to suggest that "the merchant tailors don't always show deep knowledge of conditions." The employers' attention is called to the fact that the manufacturing countries are not producing tailors because a boy will not give five years of his time learning a trade that pays so poorly.

The labor editor says the widest immigration possible will not aid employers, as tailoring conditions in Europe are the same as here.

"From the merchant tailors' point of view, there is always a shortage of tailors, and there will always be—there are tailors enough to make up all the custom work in the country's spare weeks each season, if that were possible," says the editor. "The truth of the matter is that there is on file in the city every day that can employ its journeymen full time the year 'round. At the very least, the average working time of tailors is about nine months each year; and, so long as this is true, there cannot be a real shortage of tailors. Climatic conditions are responsible for these losses, because less tailors in some cities; and when such is the case, there are too many in other cities."

COMPANY "UNION" FAILS.

Portland, Ore., Dec. 16.—The timber bosses' company "union" is traveling the inevitable road to oblivion. This "union" is known as the loyal legion of loggers and lumbermen. At the meeting of its board of directors in this city the president reported that "the greatest difficulty" the last few months was the number of employers who have deserted the "union," and they have left no immediate need of protection against industrial radicalism."

Officers of the loyal side union of timber workers remind workers of the claim by trade unionist that the A. F. of L. would throw over the loyal legion when it served their purpose to prevent organization.

"These employers are not concerned with the L. W. W.," the statement says from another source that the I. W. W. will be 'taken care of.' These employers have used the loyal legion as a tool. It is now worn out and they discard it."

ILLITERACY IN CAPITAL.

Washington, Dec. 16.—There are 10,196 illiterate persons 21 years of age and over in the nation's capital, according to Superintendent of Schools Ballou, annual report.

"They live in the most progressive nation on earth, but civilization is passing them by," he said.

The educator declared that the public schools reach very few illiterates, because "a man or woman who has never attended school does not voluntarily enter school after he is grown. He is timid and awkward and ashamed when he does enter."

MORE STOCK DIVIDENDS.

New York, Dec. 16.—The Wamsutta textile mills of New Bedford declared a 50 per cent stock dividend. The Charlton mills of Fall River announced the same dividend. Richman Bros. company of Cleveland, manufacturers and retailers of clothing, has declared a 100 per cent stock dividend, a cash dividend of $1 per share and 50 cents extra on all stock.

The Standard screw company has declared a 70 per cent stock dividend.

END RAILROAD BOARD PRESIDENT ADVISES

Washington, Dec. 16.—Abolition of the railroad labor board is recommended by the president in his annual message.

The theory of having the workers and railroad managers opposed, as this system has proved that both sides are always partisan, the president said. It is proposed to have the labor board's work done at Washington by a division of the interstate commerce commission, which will be enlarged for that purpose. The board merely reports on the theory that the commission sets freight and passenger rates, and it should also set wages when railroads and railroad managers fail to agree.

The president favored a wage for railroad workers that would be "within the limits the traffic will bear." In the case of dividends for railroads, the chief executive was most explicit in the call for a "living wage" for the men. He said: "Railroads are not to be expected to render the most efficient service in our social organization without a fair return on capital invested."

The presidential recommendation for the abolition of the railroad labor board is in line with recent declarations by several of his political associates. Railroad managers do not oppose making the commission a court, and working conditions a function of the interstate commerce commission, as this is in line with the feudalistic theory that there is no difference between freight rates and wage rates.

ASSAIL BUTLER'S RECORD.

Washington, Dec. 16.—Senator-elect Shipstead of Minnesota is opposing the confirmation of Pierce Butler, who has been nominated by the president as a member of the United States supreme court.

It is charged that Mr. Butler is retained by the Twin City rapid transit company of Minneapolis and St. Paul to prevent an extension of the "yellow dog" fund alleged to have been used for corrupt purposes in the recent special legislature from the Minnesota legislature and the Minneapolis city council.

Mr. Shipstead says in a report by a public utility expert that $2,948,597 of the company's profits have been diverted to "extraordinary purposes which requires investigation."

The Twin City rapid transit company, with Mr. Butler acting as its legal adviser, has resisted every artifice and technicality to prevent the city from examining its accounts," said Mr. Shipstead. "This contest is still waged, with Mr. Butler using his legal skill to defeat the ends of justice and prevent the city from uncovering the purpose for which these secret funds were disbursed."

WIN EIGHT-HOUR DAY.

Seattle, Dec. 16.—The International Longshoremen's association special arbitration board, in an eight-hour fight at Weed, Cal., and at Klamath Falls, Ore. These movements have been on during the past year. The Klamath Falls timber bosses were unanimous against it. Four days after the award was rendered the employers stated that they "voluntarily restored the eight-hour day," despite the fact that they were defeated in an attempt to establish the long work day.

The Weed, Cal., strike means much more to the workers of the northwest than immediate gains for the men involved. Union officials declare.

The lumber lords cannot successfully defeat workers who are thoroughly organized. It also means that workers have again been impressed with the fact that complete and proper organization is the only safeguard for the present; their only hope for the future."

U. S. PAYS PAUPER WAGE.

Washington, Dec. 16.—The pauper wage paid by the government is indicated by Bindery Helper in the treasury department appropriation bill:

"Four bindery sawboard operators, at $720 each; eight elevator conductors, at $720 each; eight firemen, at $720 each; coal passer, $840; four automobile truck laborers, $840 each; skilled laborers, at $1,040; four at $720 each; two electricians, at $1,260 each; wireman, 1906; 29 laborers, at $640 each; laborer, at $1,040; painter, $1,300; plumber's assistant, $780; two carpenters, at $1,040 each; engineer, $1,060; three firemen, at $720 each."

U. S. OWNS MANY MINES.

Washington, Dec. 16.—The United States government is the largest individual land owners in the world and also holds important reserves of phosphate, potash and other salts, says H. Foster Bain, director bureau of mines, in his annual report.

The report intimates that in time the government's coal lands will rival the private coal mine operations in the country.

STREET CAR MEN GAIN.

Wilmington, N. C., Dec. 16.—The Street Car Men's union and the local street car company have reached a basis of agreement. Rates are 35 cents to 45% cents an hour, the latter rate being paid after two years' service.

SHIP LIFE ENDANGERED.

Washington, Dec. 16.—The lesson of the Titanic means nothing to many trans-Atlantic passenger ships, which are taking the same risks with icebergs to save a few hours' time, according to the annual report of the naval hydrographic office.

Proposed Constitution Swamped by Big Majority

Chicago, Dec. 16.—In the greatest victory ever recorded by a state federation of labor, the proposed state constitution was smashed beyond recognition by a popular vote of the people. The majority against the proposal is estimated all the way from 500,000 to 800,000. In this city the vote against it was 20 to 1.

For nearly four years reaction has been at work on their scheme to turn the government over to the state supreme court.

Trade unionists were the largest organized unit against the constitution. A campaign that covered the entire state was conducted by the state federation of labor. Mass meetings were held everywhere, and the proposal was ripped to pieces by representatives of the workers who warned Illinois citizens of the dangers confronting them.

No one denied that the proposal was backed by big business. Victor Elting, general counsel for the Illinois state federation of labor, showed that the increased powers of the courts was suggested by Judge Gary a few months prior to the convention which prepared the constitution for submission to the people.

MELLON AGAIN ATTACKED BY CONGRESSMAN FREAR

Washington, Dec. 16.—Congressman Frear has renewed his attack on Secretary Mellon and Treasury rulings permitting great wealth to escape taxation.

Under the law the secretary can levy a penalty of 25 per cent where he believes corporations hold surpluses to avoid payment of taxes by stock holders of individuals. These corporations are now dividing their surpluses through stock dividends, Congressman Frear says upwards of $2,000,000,000 in surpluses are escaping penalties and injustices are being created, Secretary Mellon refuses to enforce the law.

On the floor of the house Congressman Frear submitted a list of questions to the treasury official. "Is it true," he asked, "that due to legal evasions possible under existing law, disclosed by the secret records of your office, that Mr. Rockefeller, Mr. Morgan, Mr. Mellon and others of great wealth are not paying one-fifth of the income tax they are popularly supposed to pay and that the burden falls on their wealth, due to investments in tax-free securities, stock dividends, rents, sales and bond exchanges and other forms of tax avoidance? I gather this is so from your official report.

"These are matters that congress has permitted to remain secret for no logical reason that I can see, and I am hoping your answers will be specific, so that the necessity for full publicity can be determined by congress."

WANT COMPENSATION.

St. Louis, Mo., Dec. 16.—The building trades council has launched a statewide movement for a state compensation commission.

"The enactment of such a bill," the trade unionists say, "must be opposed by insurance companies, but the exclusive plan of state insurance in the workmen's compensation law is the only plan that will assure working people a just settlement of their cases for compensation, because each claim will be allowed after the facts upon appeal to the workmen's compensation commission after it has been found to be for the amount to which the claimant is entitled under the law."

PAY LOW WAGE; GET COAL.

Knoxville, Tenn., Dec. 16.—Business men in this city are whimpering because a large textile mill is furnishing its own coal to employees. Trade unionists say able-bodied men are paid $10 a week and up, but that the business men have made no protest against these wage cuts, and now they growl when the coal company doles out coal to itself, furnishes coal to these workers to "keep them contented."

ROADS EARN $85,234,000.

Washington, Dec. 16.—Earnings of class 1 railroads in October totaled $85,234,000, or 6.95 per cent on the value of the properties, as fixed by the interstate commerce commission.

Net income this October were slightly in excess of last year, but the decline in net earnings was caused by the shop men's lockout.

'SHINERS ARE ENJOINED.

Kalamazoo, Mich., Dec. 16.—Because metal polishers refused to accept wage cuts and the Taylor system the C. G. Stirling company secured a handful of injunctions from Judge George V. Weimer. The company has plants in Cleveland, Detroit and Chicago, but rates at the local plant are 50 per cent lower than at the other places.

SHIP SUBSIDY BILL IS BEFORE SENATE

Washington, Dec. 16.—The ship subsidy bill has been reported to the senate by the interstate commerce committee, and the Madden amendment, inserted by the house, has been stricken out from the bill. Friends of the bill affected much alarm at this amendment, which provided that the shipping board would have to come to congress every year for appropriations. It was claimed this would permit contracts or at least place them at the mercy of a congress that might be hostile to the subsidy scheme. The president went on record against the amendment, and in a letter to Senator Jones of the commerce committee stated that the bill might as well be defeated if the amendment was retained.

Officers of the International Seamen's union looked upon the Madden amendment as more or less of a smoke screen. They fear that the next section in the bill makes it mandatory for the secretary of the treasury to pay out moneys on the certification by officers of the shipping board. The two amendments are contradictory, but the second amendment makes it possible for the shipping board to carry out contracts which would quite possibly be upheld by the courts, the officers of the seamen's union point out.

The bill is now before the senate, and might pass if its friends could force a roll call. One senator made the significant statement that "there will be no subsidy bill because there will be no vote on the measure."

The senate committee divided on the bill, 11 to 5. In his minority report Senator Fletcher said the proposal "involved launching the government upon a sea of trouble and enormous losses in the form of a direct contribution from the treasury to specific private enterprises.

"This is a proposal to enact a law adopting a permanent policy of the government which has been repeatedly proposed heretofore and as often rejected by congress," he said.

"The measure is attempted to be supported by the assumption that it is sound because the opponents of such a policy do not propose anything better or different. Such an assumption is, of course, unwarranted. It assumes that if an unwise or positively vicious measure is proposed it should be accepted unless some substitute is suggested."

ALLEN BACKS DOWN.

Emporia, Kan., Dec. 16.—Judge Harry Allen district court has dismissed the state's case against William Allen White, who was charged by governor Allen with violating the "can't-strike" law when he posted a sign professing "sympathy and sympathy" with the railroad shop men.

The case was commenced recklessly or maliciously, without investigation of the facts to ascertain whether the prosecution was justified," said the court.

William Allen White posted his sign in about three days after the shop strike started. The governor claimed this was sympathizing with an unlawful act, and was a violation of the law. The governor secured enough publicity over the case for half a dozen pictures, but he paid no more attention to it. The accused insisted he was denied the right of free expression of opinion. On three occasions he appeared for trial.

SUGGESTS CO-OP. BUYING.

Washington, Dec. 16.—The president in his annual message to congress suggests a friendly attitude toward co-operation in his annual message to congress. He said economies could be traced to the middle man, but not all of the blame should be placed on that individual.

"We have attacked the problem on one side by the promotion of co-operative buying," he said. "Admittedly, the consumer is much to blame himself for his prodigal expenditure and his exaction of service, but government can well serve to point the way and encourage the spread of price, especially by reducing the production of food and its consumption."

FUR WORKERS WIN.

Philadelphia, Dec. 16.—After a four-weeks' strike organized fur workers obtained the ranks of the fur manufacturers' association and secured agreements with 58 manufacturers. When the strike started the association announced that it would not deal with the union, but the fur workers' solidarity resulted in changed viewpoints.

NO STATE COSSACKS.

Minneapolis, Dec. 16.—Governor Preus' crime commission does not favor state cossacks. It accepts organized labor's offer to establish a state central bureau of crime records to co-ordinate the work of peace officers throughout the state.

OPPOSE ANTI-UNION SHOP.

Youngstown, Ohio, Dec. 16.—The Mahoning foundry has wrecked its business in an attempt to establish the anti-union shop.

DID BOSSES IMPORT I. W. W. INTO ARIZONA?

Phoenix, Ariz., Dec. 16.—Governor-elect Hunt's appointment of H. S. McCluskey, president of the Arizona state federation of labor, as private secretary of the governor, recalls that the deportation of workers by employers to disprove the charge that they imported I. W. W.'s into this state, is unique.

The challenge was made in 1918 at a meeting of the executive committee of the Arizona state council of defense in the office of Governor Hunt. Every mine manager in this state was present, as were several labor officials. McCluskey said he had information which justified the statement that the importation of I. W. W.'s into Arizona was being paid by certain copper corporations. He challenged one mine manager, a member of the executive council of the state council of defense, to make a motion asking for an investigation of the matter by the United States war labor board. The trade unionist said he would bring the charges before the labor board. The copper manager refused to make the motion.

The chairman asked the other mine managers to instruct their representatives on the executive committee to make similar motions. All declined to do so, and denied that their corporations had "knowingly" paid the transportation of I. W. W.'s into the state.

Not mention of this incident was made by the copper-controlled press. This silence is in marked contrast to the hysterical "exposures" made by previous year. This outlawry smashed the workers' attempt to improve conditions in the state, and left the mine managers and other respectable citizens. The copper-controlled press has charged that workers were I. W. W.'s, and this was the defense of a lawlessness that was never published.

CAVE-IN ACT IS VOID.

Washington, Dec. 16.—The United States supreme court has set aside the Pennsylvania law which prohibited the mining of anthracite coal in a manner that would endanger the lives of persons living in houses or occupying houses situated on the surface soil. Justice Brandeis dissented.

The court held that the law deprived coal owners of valuable property rights without compensation. Under the decision, coal owners can mine coal without any regard for the safety of life, danger lives and property, unless the coal that is necessary for props is paid for.

In his dissenting opinion, Justice Brandeis said:

"If by mining anthracite coal the owners would necessarily cause poisonous gases, I suppose no one would doubt the power of the state to prevent the operation by compelling him to refrain from digging so deep or excavating so near the surface as to expose the community to like dangers? In the latter case, as in the former, carrying on the business would be a public nuisance."

FOOD COSTS GOING UP.

Washington, Dec. 16.—Food costs are slowly and steadily going up, according to the bureau of labor statistics.

During the month, October 15 to November 15, food costs in 30 of 51 representative cities increased as follows: Pittsburgh, 3 per cent; New York and Philadelphia, 2 per cent; Cleveland, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Newark, New Haven, Norfolk and Portland, Me., 1 per cent. Boston, Buffalo, Fall River, Little Rock, Omaha, St. Paul, Salt Lake City, Savannah and Washington, D. C., 1 per cent. Seven cities showed a decrease of less than five-tenths of 1 per cent.

SINGS REPUDIATED SONG.

Charleston, W. Va., Dec. 16.—Governor Allen of Kansas sang his republican campaign song before a group of anti-unionists in this city. Coal owners who are attempting to break the United Mine workers have sung before one of the biggest hookum dealers in the labor game. They have given him a rousing reception, as he preached the doctrine that his audience wanted to hear. The governor, however, gave Governor Allen a different reception last month.

APPLES DUMPED IN RIVER.

Wenatchee, Wash., Dec. 16.—Nearly 1,000 car loads of frozen apples have been dumped into the Columbia river at Wenatchee in one week, on order of state health officers. Railroads are attempting to prevent the dumping, and have established their company "union." The frozen apples is one result of this policy of "scientific management" and perfected industrial life that holds out hope of a solution of these problems," he said.

BARBERS' ORGANIZE.

Indianapolis, Dec. 16.—The Journeymen Barbers' International union has issued charters to locals in Middletown (Ky.), Drumballer, Alberta, Canada and Rossland, B. C.

SUBSIDY WON'T SUPPLY CARGOES FOR VESSELS

Washington, Dec. 16.—It is a question of ship cargoes, and payments out of the treasury will not solve that problem, was one of the points made against the subsidy by the minority of the senate committee that reported the bill.

"This measure means simply the establishment of a general subsidy system that will be fastened on the country for an indefinite period. Natural and economic causes for decline in volume of international trade cannot be overcome by financial aid out of the federal treasury," the minority report says. "It goes in the absence of foreign trade, and in the meantime, while the burden of taxes of the people will be increased by the amount of the aid given.

"The bill is a misnomer and sop-per, and the ways and means of supplying it are worse than the bill, would simply result in the unseemingly spectacle of representatives of private enterprises, building and dry dock company.

The syndicate's original plan, as submitted to Chairman Lasker of the shipping board, contemplated that the taking over of the Leviathan, as well as of the fleet of the United States lines, and the building of a fleet of fifteen 20-knot liners for the Atlantic passenger trade."

The Tribune's reference to the Leviathan recalls the fact that the original ship subsidy bill, as urged by Chairman Lasker, provided that the shipping board to dispose of this monster passenger vessel for not less than $4,000,000. Leviathan is now being overhauled at a cost of millions of dollars, and if the contract representatives blocked the game to give this boat away to "insiders" by defeating the bill they will find Leviathan can not be sold for less than the cost of reconditioning her.

ONE-HALF OF FOREIGN TRADE CARRIED BY AMERICAN SHIPS

Washington, Dec. 16.—The United States shipping board acknowledges in its annual report that one-half of the country's foreign trade last year was "moved by American bottoms."

The foreign trade was $4,231,000 long tons of cargo.

The report does not include coastwise trade, in which only American vessels are used.

The shipping board's statement, at a time of world-wide economic prostration, is in line with propaganda that the "American flag is being swept from the seven seas."

TOO MANY COAL MINES.

Washington, Dec. 16.—There are too many soft coal mines, according to the fact-finding commission appointed by the president to investigate that industry.

"How great is the present inflation of the industry may be stated in exactly at this time," the announcement reads, "but unquestionably the inflation is considerable. The existing bituminous capacity range from 30 to fully 40 per cent in excess of the maximum peace demand, which for the last five years has averaged about 510,000,000 tons a year.

"It seems plain that the industry should not be inflated by opening new mines. The facts already presented furnish a full argument against continuing to enlist new capital in the business, thereby opening new mines and thereby increasing the inflation and further spread and thus overtax carrying facilities and thus making certain time of miners in the vicinity that are already well equipped to shift 5 to 10 per cent of their working shift now."

FORCE WORKERS TO JOIN.

Everett, Wash., Dec. 16.—The Great Northern railway company has applied for employment to sign a pledge that they will join the company "union," or lose their shop men decide.

The shop men compare this position that they are asked of depending on the voluntary action of workers to join the trade union, saying:

"There are hundreds of men on strike today against conditions imposed by the railroad labor board, and the various railroad companies, men who did not belong to the organization, and perhaps never will," the shop men say. "But even these men, who enjoyed all the privileges of the settlement secured through the organization without paying a cent therefor, could not be induced to join. They would result from the board's rulings."

WANT HIGHER WAGES.

New York, Dec. 16.—More than 10,000 printing pressmen in the commercial and book printing shops of this city have presented a new wage scale. They are being assisted by President Berry of the pressmen's union. The employers want a 5 per cent wage cut and the pressmen insist on a 10 per cent increase, according to report.

LEGAL MIND LOOKS BACK.

New York, Dec. 16.—The legal method and the legal mind are for the most part backward looking in their processes, said Dean Pound of Cornell university in addressing the annual meeting of the society of engineers.

"Legal lag" has been a serious evil value to society it cannot be said to have developed any philosophy of industrial life that holds out hope of a solution of these problems," he said.

COAL OWNERS PROSPER.

Washington, Dec. 16.—The average earnings of soft coal owners the past six years was 12 per cent, says the federal trade commission in its annual report. The high rate of 29 per cent was earned in 1917.

U. S. SHIPPING BOARD OFFICIALS TO BUY SHIPS

Washington, Dec. 16.—In a speech in opposition to the ship subsidy bill Congressman Davis of Tennessee included a statement by the New York Tribune, November 22, that members of the United States shipping board are part of a combination that is being formed to buy ships in event of the ship subsidy bill passes. This is of especial interest in view of the intense activity of members of the shipping board to secure the passage of the ship subsidy bill. The Tribune's statement follows:

Leading personnel of the syndicate which proposes to buy the United States lines includes men now going into the concern, and to form the largest Atlantic operating company, it was indicated yesterday. They are Gerard Swope, of the General Electric company; William Boyce McCormack & Moore; W. F. Gibbs, naval architect; William Averell and J. Barstow Smull of the shipping board, and Homer Ferguson of the Newport News shipbuilding and dry dock company.

The syndicate's original plan, as submitted to Chairman Lasker of the shipping board, contemplated that the taking over of the Leviathan, as well as of the fleet of the United States lines, and the building of a fleet of fifteen 20-knot liners for the Atlantic passenger trade."

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EDUCATION IS COSTLY.

Washington, Dec. 16.—The education of children today is of a different type than 40 years ago, according to Commissioner of Education Tigert in his education report, published.

"Sixty-eight per cent of all the children in the country never reach high school, and it is to be stated as worth the name is taught below high school, and it is to be stated that only the children of our nation are growing up with little or no practical or theoretical knowledge of agricultural science. This is a menace to our national prosperity and it is a grave injustice to our children, since there is no subject which so frees and enlightens the human spirit as the study of science.

"We still know very little about the laws of the human mind, and little about the art of social communication. The science dealing with the social psychology of children and of intelligence tests, is only just beginning a piece of work of great importance for the future social value to the nation. For such work the universities should be founded in the public schools. Such departments could be established in connection with many existing departments already exist for the study of agriculture and of animals. Is it too much to ask that such departments be established for the more thorough study of the science of rearing our children?"

MANY ACRES RECLAIMED.

Washington, Dec. 16.—During the last 20 years the reclamation service has reclaimed 1,675,000 acres of desert arid land in the west with a complete water supply, according to the annual report of Director Davis of the reclamation service. In the same period about 1,100,000 acres of private lands has received a supplemental supply.

These acres have been added another state to the Union with agricultural products equal to that of the third smallest state, the combined value of the crops of Vermont and Connecticut.

This is one of the government activities that ship subsidy advocates would like to kill as a step in their plan of using the purse of private with owners.

POTTERS' STRIKE OFF.

East Liverpool, Ohio, Dec. 16.—The nation-wide strike of pottery workers was declared off, following an all-day conference between officials and representatives of the National Brotherhood of Operative Potters. The strike was caused by an attempt to reduce wages, following the expiration of the agreement. The men will work in Atlantic City to renew contractual relations.

EMPLOYMENT GAINS.

Albany, N. Y., Dec. 16.—Employment in the manufacturing industries of New York state continues on the up-grade, reports the New York state department of labor. The increase from October to November was over 2 per cent. The gain has proceeded without interruption since February, it is stated.

WOULD JAIL PROFITEERS.

Boston, Dec. 16.—Mayor Curley would jail coal profiteers and has asked the city courts to impose jail sentences instead of fines.